



CLAIM AMENDMENTS (Merjan 10/730,385)

We claim:

Claim 1 (currently amended). A pile comprising a hollow uniformly tapered steel body, said tapered body having a cross-section, taken perpendicular to a longitudinal axis, which is a convex polygon having 8 to 24 sides, said sides being substantially equal in length, said body being at least about 3 meters long, having a lower diameter which is about 200 mm to 400 mm and a larger upper diameter and being of steel about 5 to 13 mm thick formed from sheet steel folded into the tapered shape of said convex polygon and having its longitudinally extending free edges welded together, said body having at its bottom a closure constructed and arranged to substantially prevent ingress of the soil into said body during the driving of the pile, the construction and arrangement of said hollow body being such that said hollow body can be driven into the ground by hammer blows transmitted to the hollow unfilled top of said body and be filled with concrete thereafter.

Claim 2 (previously presented). A pile as in claim 1, said polygon being a substantially regular polygon.

Claim 3 (currently amended). A pile comprising a hollow uniformly tapered steel body, said tapered body having a cross-section, taken perpendicular to a longitudinal axis, which is a convex polygon having 8 to 24 sides, said sides being substantially equal in length, said body being at least about 3 meters long, having a lower diameter which is

about 200 mm to 400 mm and a larger upper diameter and being of steel about 5 to 13 mm thick formed from sheet steel folded into the tapered shape of said convex polygon and having its longitudinally extending free edges welded together, said body having at its bottom a closure constructed and arranged to substantially prevent ingress of the soil into said body during the driving of the pile, ~~A pile as in claim 2~~, the very top of said body being formed to a circular cross-section such that said top can engage with, match and be butt-welded to the end of a straight pipe of corresponding circular cross-section, the construction and arrangement of said hollow body being such that said hollow body can be driven into the ground by hammer blows transmitted to the hollow unfilled top of said body and be filled with concrete thereafter.

Claim 4 (previously presented) A driven pile in place in the ground, said pile having at its lower end the body of claim 1 filled with concrete.

Claim 5 (currently amended). A pile driving process which comprises driving ~~the~~ a hollow uniformly tapered steel body ~~of claim 1~~ into the ground by blows transmitted to the very top of said body and filling said body with concrete, said tapered body having a cross-section, taken perpendicular to a longitudinal axis, which is a convex polygon having 8 to 24 sides, said sides being substantially equal in length, said body being at least about 3 meters long, having a lower diameter which is about 200 mm to 400 mm and a larger upper diameter and being of steel about 5 to 13 mm thick formed from sheet steel folded into the tapered shape of said convex polygon and having its longitudinally extending free edges welded together, said body having at its bottom a closure constructed and arranged to substantially prevent ingress of the soil into said body during the driving of the pile.

Claim 6 (previously presented). A pile as in claim 1 in place in the ground, said pile having been driven only until said tapered body is largely embedded in, and supported by, cohesive soil.

Claim 7 (previously presented). A pile as in claim 6 in which said cohesive soil is over-consolidated clay.

Claim 8 (previously presented). A structure supported by piles, said supporting piles comprising a pile as set forth in claim 6.

Claim 9 (previously presented). A structure as in claim 8 in which said cohesive soil is over-consolidated clay.

Claim 10 (amended). A process which comprises driving a pile as set forth in claim 1 into the ground until said tapered body is largely embedded in cohesive soil, stopping said driving, and ~~than~~ then building a structure supported by said pile while said tapered body is so embedded

Claim 11 (new) A pile as in claim 3, said polygon being a substantially regular polygon.

Claim 12 (new) A process as in claim 5, said polygon being a substantially regular polygon.